

Members

Sen. Thomas Weatherwax, Chairperson  
Sen. John Waterman  
Sen. James Lewis  
Sen. Richard Young  
Rep. Robert Hoffman  
Rep. Phyllis Pond  
Rep. Robert Bischoff  
Rep. Paul Robertson



## NATURAL RESOURCES STUDY COMMITTEE

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Authority: IC 2-5-5-1

### MEETING MINUTES<sup>1</sup>

Meeting Date: October 12, 2006  
Meeting Time: 10:00 A.M.  
Meeting Place: Ft. Harrison State Park, 6002 N. Post Road, the Garrison - Lawrence Room  
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana  
Meeting Number: 2

**Members Present:** Sen. Thomas Weatherwax, Chairperson; Sen. James Lewis; Rep. Robert Hoffman; Rep. Phyllis Pond; Rep. Robert Bischoff.

**Members Absent:** Sen. John Waterman; Sen. Richard Young; Rep. Paul Robertson.

Senator Weatherwax (Chair) called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. After introductions of the members of the Committee, the Chair began by calling for a presentation concerning the Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry program.

**Topic: Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry Program**

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<sup>1</sup> Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.in.gov/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

**Senator Timothy Lanane, State Senator, District 25**

Senator Lanane described his acquaintance with the Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry (FHFH) organization. The group, based on their spiritual convictions, has a primary mission to provide food to feed the hungry. FHFH seeks voluntary donations to pay for the processing of deer meat. After processing, the venison is distributed to shelters and food pantries in the local community.

**Steve Corbin, South Central Indiana FHFH Coordinator, FHFH**

Mr. Corbin stated that the goal of FHFH was to encourage farmers and hunters to provide food to their local communities. FHFH is a tax exempt organization that was started in Maryland in 1997. Mr. Corbin delivered a Power Point presentation (Exhibit # 1) that included the following information:

- One out of five American children go to bed hungry each night.
- One deer can feed 200 people.
- The top food item needed by food banks is meat, which is the food bank's number one budget item.
- FHFH provides meat to various groups that work to feed the hungry (e.g. America's Second Harvest).
- FHFH uses the following distribution system:
  - Hunters and farmers donate deer and other game animals.
  - Licensed meat processors cut and package the meat.
  - The packaged meat is taken to regional food banks.
  - The food banks, along with local feeding programs and ministries, provide food to local needy individuals.
- FHFH does not accept road kill.
- FHFH negotiates processing fees with local butchers. The average butchering fee charged to FHFH is \$50 per deer. The person donating the deer does not have to pay this fee.
- Each deer that is donated provides two benefits: the state deer population is reduced and local individuals are fed.
- FHFH provides blanket liability insurance coverage.
- FHFH has national staff who work with local volunteers. FHFH has programs in 27 states.
- Since 1997, FHFH has helped to provide over 3 million pounds of meat.

Mr. Corbin stated that there is a huge potential for increased donations, but the limiting factor is raising enough money to cover the butchering fees. A handout concerning recommendations was distributed to the Committee. (Exhibit # 2) FHFH would like the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to help let hunters know about FHFH (e.g. information about FHFH in the state hunting guide and on DNR's web site). Also, they would like DNR to allow an optional \$2 donation when a hunter buys a license. Maryland provided for an optional donation and raised about \$110 million between 1999 and 2001. (He noted that since 2002 Maryland has made the donation a mandatory part of the hunting license but FHFH does not want DNR to require a mandatory fee.) A recent survey indicated that 83% of hunters would hunt more if a child asked to go hunting with them. 85% stated they would hunt more if they knew they could donate the deer to food banks. A donation option lets hunters take an extra deer without paying for butchering on meat they may not be able to use. The survey also indicated that 43% of the general population would be more likely to hunt if they knew the deer meat would go to feed the hungry.

FHFH would like to work with DNR to coordinate animal donations with youth hunting days and deer nuisance permits. There are many benefits of working together: more hunting licenses sold, more hunting equipment sold, more control of the deer population, and more hungry people being fed.

**Kyle Hupfer, Director, Department of Natural Resources**

Mr. Hupfer stated that FHFH is a great program. DNR and the Department of Correction currently have a donation program. Donated deer are sent to Pendleton Penitentiary where offenders process the meat in an on-site training facility. The meat is then sent to food banks throughout the state. This year during the opening weekend of deer hunting season refrigerated trucks will be available at several check-in sites to accept donated deer. This past summer the fish from the new State Fair pond were sent to Pendleton where they were processed into fillets. DNR has traditionally avoided any donation check-offs on the hunting licenses for two reasons: (1) there are many worthy groups (e.g. Heritage Trust) that could be added which would cause the number of possible check-offs to grow like license plates; and (2) any group listed would appear to be a group that is officially sanctioned by DNR.

The Chair allowed remarks concerning the deer donation programs and the following comments were made:

**Steve Corbin, FHFH**: Would like to see DNR provide refrigerated trucks in Brown and Bartholomew counties during the opening of deer hunting season because of the lack of meat processors in the area. He also noted that although FHFH must pay a meat processing fee, transportation costs are low since the meat stays in the local community.

**Lynn Dennis, The Nature Conservancy**: Suggested the placement of donation jars at deer check-in sites as a way to raise money for FHFH.

**Dick Mercier, Indiana Sportsmen's Roundtable**: Supported the efforts of FHFH and would like to see DNR assist FHFH in helping the hungry.

**Representative Terri Austin, District 36**: Indicated that she introduced a bill concerning a check-off for cancer research. The bill had a provision that required the recipient to generate a minimum threshold amount of money to stay listed as a check-off recipient.

During discussion by the Committee, the Committee members noted that a program like FHFH benefits DNR and needy Hoosiers. Members indicated that they would like to see DNR come up with solutions that would help FHFH.

**Topic:           Discussion of Proposed Findings and Recommendations**

**PD 3445** - Discontinues the fishing license exemption for residents who are at least 65 years of age. Establishes a senior yearly fishing license and a senior lifetime fishing license for residents who are at least 65 years of age. Establishes a yearly conservation license, which allows access to all fish and wildlife areas but does not allow the holder to hunt or fish. Provides that fees collected from purchasers of the conservation license shall be deposited

in the heritage trust fund. (Exhibit # 3)

**Kyle Hupfer**, DNR, explained that PD 3445 creates a yearly senior fishing license, a lifetime senior fishing license, and a yearly conservation license. The senior licenses would enable the state to receive federal matching money. The conservation license would allow people who do not hunt or fish to support the Heritage Trust program.

**Dick Mercier**, Indiana Sportsmens Roundtable, stated that they support PD 3445.

**HB 1031-2004** - Prohibits, except when granted written permission, constructing or maintaining a pier, a dock, or another structure that blocks or restricts an easement holder's access to or use of a public lake. Allows an easement holder to use certain structures that extend from the easement to the shoreline or into a lake. Authorizes the natural resources commission to mediate disputes between easement holders. Authorizes judicial review of commission actions. Authorizes easement holders to form an association or a conservancy district to manage the easement. (Exhibit # 4)

**Representative Phyllis Pond**, District 85, explained that HB 1031 was a bill that came out of the 2003 Natural Resources Study Committee to address the problem where a easement holder builds a structure that restricts another easement holder's access to a lake.

**Glenna Shelby**, lakeside property owner, stated that some older homes have easements that are granted in the deed. There are developers who use an easement to allow people who do not live on the lake to gain access. This has led to overcrowding on many lakes.

After Committee discussion, Rep. Pond agreed to hold HB 1031-2004.

**Topic: Recognition of Representative Hoffman**

The Committee noted that Representative Bob Hoffman was retiring from the General Assembly. Each member recognized Rep. Hoffman's achievements as a member of the House of Representatives, Chair of the Natural Resources Study Committee, and friend to those he worked with.

**Topic: Final Vote**

**PD 3445** The Committee voted 5-0, by roll call vote, to recommend PD 3445.

**Final Report** The Committee voted 5-0, by roll call vote, to adopt the final report, as amended.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at about noon.